

doubt assisted by the action of infertility. In a population which is increasing in numbers but slowly, fertility is almost balanced by infertility.

If we cast our eyes round the circle of our

acquaintances how many are the families we shall find to be verging upon extinction after perhaps

a transient burst of fecundity!

Infertility very speedily disembarrasses a race of an admixture of alien blood that is of lower reproductive vitality or is unsuited to the local environment.

The immigrant strain may for a time revolutionize society by setting up an eddy of abnormal activity or by the introduction of new arts or ideas.

The survival of foreign elements may from time to time be disclosed by the birth of exceptional individuals.

whose character approximates more closely to that of other races than to that of their own. But as time advances the occurrence of these irregularities will become rarer until the blended race settles down into homogeneity. These reflections

assist us in understanding how a race may retain its peculiar character although it has interbred

with alien immigrants: or may revert to its ancient type after temporary bursts of eccentricity caused by the admixture of alien blood.

Infertility, it may be added, contributes to the levelling effect of marriage in preventing a race from improving itself by the breeding of men of talent or "supermen." Persons of exceptional talents are not as a rule of prepotent

reproductive fertility. and it is upon less abnormal individuals that the race depends for the continuity of its existence.

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The earliest of our historical records are concerned with little else than wars of invasion. and there is no reason why we should believe that these movements of population only commenced